



News Release

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Office of Inspector General
Washington, DC 20546

For Release

Roberta L. Gross
Inspector General
(Phone: 202-358-1220)

October 21, 1999

Samuel A. Maxey
Assistant Inspector General for Investigations
(Phone: 202-358-1233)

RELEASE: 2000-005

Former NASA Contractor Employee Pleads Guilty

On October 18, 1999, Erich L. Gillespie, Camden, NJ, a former Cortez III employee at NASA Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Virginia, pled guilty in the United States District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, to one count each of Receiving an Unlawful Gratuity (18 U.S.C. Section 201(c)(1)(A)), and making a False Declaration Before Grand Jury (18 U.S.C. 1623). Mr. Gillespie was released to the U.S. Marshal's pending his January 28, 2000 sentencing date.

The government alleged that Mr. Gillespie accepted a monetary payment of \$5,000 from Charles A. White, the owner and operator of White's Aircraft Parts, Fruitland, MD, for information received concerning the auction of a C-130 airplane at Wallops Island. The government also alleged that Mr. White purchased the C-130 for \$15,000 with the intentions on reselling the airplane for an undisclosed amount. At least three other parties were interested in purchasing the C-130. Also, Mr. Gillespie, knowingly made a false material declaration, while under oath and testifying in a proceeding before a Grand Jury of the United States, in the Eastern District of Virginia.

Mr. White was indicted in the United States District Court, Eastern District of Virginia. White was charged with one count of Giving an Unlawful Gratuity (18 U.S.C. 201(c)(1)(A)), and one count of False Statement (18 U.S.C. 1001).

The investigation was conducted by Special Agents of the NASA Office of Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The prosecution is being handled by Alan Salsbury, Assistant United States Attorney, Eastern District of Virginia, Norfolk Division, Norfolk, Virginia (757) 441-6331.

-End-

Complaints May Be Referred To The NASA OIG Hotline At:
800-424-9183